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Bullying Prevention

Why is so much attention being paid to the issue of bullying these days? Years ago, bullying-type behavior was dismissed simply as 'kids being kids.' Awareness is growing that threats, rumors, even physical violence associated with bullying can scar children for life, and can even be a risk factor for suicide. With the growth of the Internet, bullying has taken on a whole new dimension with what's become known as cyberbullying. Children can be targeted as victims with the simple click of a mouse, and sometimes by individuals they don't even know. The most recent Lowa Youth Survey of students in grades six, eight and 11 found half of those questioned reported being bullied at school in some way.

I encourage you to <u>register</u> for the <u>Governor's Bullying Prevention Summit</u> November 27th in Des Moines. In conjunction with the summit, IDPH will launch the 'Your Life – Iowa' bullying/suicide prevention project, which will include a 24-hour help line and web-based resources to help youth, parents, and other stakeholders join forces to take a stand against bullying.

National Rural Health Day

I was pleased to attend Governor Branstad's formal proclamation signing designating tomorrow, November 15 as National Rural Health Day 2012 in Iowa. A number of activities and recognitions are planned to celebrate this event, which offers an opportunity to honor Iowa's small towns, farming communities and rural areas, and to highlight the health care challenges individuals living in these areas face. Rural health care needs must be addressed through flexible programs and policies that enable rural communities to identify and meet the unique issues of their areas.

Local Governmental Public Health Baseline Report

The <u>Public Health Evaluation Committee</u> has released the <u>Local Governmental Public Health Baseline Report</u>, first baseline data collected regarding key aspects of the Iowa governmental public health system. I want to thank all local public health and environmental health administrators in Iowa who provided the data necessary to complete this report. There were several interesting findings; for example, not surprisingly, governmental local public health agencies are providing services such as immunizations, screening for diseases, home health, surveillance, and environmental health; however, there are also agencies involved in non-traditional public health service delivery like handling unused pharmaceuticals, noise pollution, and correctional health. The Evaluation Committee will repeat the survey in subsequent years to track and evaluate changes in the public health system.

Happy 'Movember'

The month of October is typically a time to highlight women's health and breast cancer. This November, it's men's turn. 'Movember' is a national movement that invites men to grow a mustache for the 30 days of November as a symbol of awareness, much like a ribbon, to generate discussions about men's health issues like prostate and testicular cancer. Our partners at the Iowa Cancer Consortium are joining the effort, and encourage Iowans to post pictures of their mustaches throughout the month on their Facebook page. Ladies can participate too by supporting their 'mo'-growing friends and family and by getting conversations started about men's health issues.

Congrats and kudos

Congratulation to Louise Lex of the IDPH <u>Bureau of Communication and Planning</u>, who has been named a recipient of the University of Iowa College of Public Health's <u>Iowa Public Health Heroes Award</u>. This award was established to increase awareness and appreciation of the critical contributions the public health workforce makes to improve wellness and disease prevention across Iowa – work that is too often unrecognized, yet vitally important to the goal of making Iowa the <u>Healthiest State</u> in the Nation.

The 59 highest-ranked critical access hospitals (CAHs) in the country were announced during the <u>National Rural Health Association's</u> (NRHA) Critical Access Hospital Conference in September. Five of the noted CAHs were from Iowa, including <u>Alegent Health Mercy Hospital</u> in Corning; <u>Alegent Health Community Memorial Hospital</u> in Missouri Valley; <u>Genesis Medical Center-Dewitt</u> in Dewitt; <u>Audubon County Memorial Hospital</u> in Audubon; and <u>Grundy County Memorial Hospital</u> in Grundy Center.

The <u>Association of Public Health Laboratories</u> (APHL) presented awards to leaders in the field of public health preparedness and response during the 2012 Laboratory Response Network (LRN) National Meeting in Denver, Colorado. Recipients included Bonnie Rubin,

assistant director for planning and development at the <u>State Hygienic Laboratory</u> at the University of Iowa, for promoting and furthering the mission of the LRN through exemplary leadership and continual momentum, working across state, federal and non-governmental organizations.

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To everyone in public health and all our partners, keep up the great work!

— Dr. Miller-Meeks